

HOUSE RESOLUTION 202
By Cooper B

A RESOLUTION to commend Aretha King for her honorable and astute service to the young people of Memphis as a tutor and mentor at Carver High School.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable public servants who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens, as well as those outstanding educators who have devoted themselves to providing the highest quality education for Tennessee's students; and

WHEREAS, Aretha King is one such estimable person who evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all her chosen endeavors; she has distinguished herself as an educator and mentor of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Ms. King is a highly respected member of the Riverview community of South Memphis, where she has raised four children and seventeen grandchildren, and has been highly involved in community activities for countless years; and

WHEREAS, throughout her exemplary tenure as a tutor and mentor at Carver High School, she has distinguished herself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and as an exceptional asset to her community; and

WHEREAS, Ms. King has served with acumen and alacrity as a tutor and mentor at Carver High School since 1999, when she was hired as an Americorps-VISTA worker through a sponsorship by the Memphis Urban League; affectionately known by students and teachers alike as "Mama King," she was brought in to the school's computer lab as part of a nationwide effort to bridge the "digital divide" between students in wealthy school districts and those in inner-city schools; and

WHEREAS, in addition to steering the students at Carver through cyberspace, she has instructed students in a number of other subjects, always positively influencing them as a champion who tries to help them through any hardships; and

WHEREAS, Ms. King is an extremely talented and compassionate educator who has worked assiduously to motivate her students to reach their full potential, both as scholars and as citizens; her soft-spoken approach is light on discipline and strong on respect; and

WHEREAS, able to relate to her students because she is a member of their community, she truly serves as an inspiration to her students and colleagues alike, and her friendship and counsel are highly valued by those who are fortunate to know her; and

WHEREAS, for her tireless efforts in service to the students of Carver High School, Ms. King earned the 2003 Beat the Odds Award as an adult who has worked to help children overcome major odds in order to thrive in school; in addition, a \$500 scholarship in her name is awarded to a student who, while not the most academically gifted, plans to attend college and needs both financial help and encouragement; and

WHEREAS, Aretha King quit school at the age of fourteen after marrying and beginning a family; she eventually earned her GED when she was 34; and

WHEREAS, she is an active and important part of her community, participating in and lending her support to numerous civic and educational organizations; and

WHEREAS, Ms. King has worked in a number of positions, from grocery store clerk to funeral director, but her work with the young men and women of Memphis has proven to be the most satisfying; and

WHEREAS, throughout her estimable career, she has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of her colleagues and students alike; and

WHEREAS, Ms. King's remarkable success as a public servant is directly attributable to her reliance on the time-honored values of hard work and common sense and her uncommon ability to work well with people from all walks of life; her motto is "Don't ever stop trying. Just do it"; and

WHEREAS, she is an extremely giving person who often reaches out with compassion to people whom life has treated unkindly, and she epitomizes the ideal of the consummate professional, dedicated public servant, and reliable friend and neighbor; and

WHEREAS, her many accomplishments aside, Ms. King is fortunate to share both love and companionship with her four children, and she has been further blessed with seventeen grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, she evinces her great faith as a member of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church, which she serves as a member of the Mother's Board and the women's ministry and as a Sunday School teacher; and

WHEREAS, Aretha King is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and she should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby commend Aretha King for her honorable and astute service to the youth of Memphis as a tutor and mentor at Carver High School and salute her unswerving commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.